AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-29 canceled.

30. (Currently amended) A compound of formula X-Y-L-W-Z, wherein:

X is an endgroup which is able to develop strong chemical and/or physical interactions toward metal surfaces, comprising

(a) at least one acidic group X^1 selected from the group consisting of ~~-COOH, -SO_3H, -OSO_3H,~~ -$PO(OH)_2$, -$PO(OH)(OR^2)$, -$OPO(OH)_2$, -$OPO(OH)(OR^2)$ and -$CR^3(NH_2)(COOH)$ or salts thereof, R^2 being an unbranched or branched C_1 to C_8 alkyl group with or without further substituents, and R^3 being H, a C_1 to C_6 alkyl group or the residues of naturally occurring amino acids, or

~~(b) at least one hydrolyzable, Si-containing group X^2,~~

Y is a hydrocarbon group having 5 to 60 carbon atoms, comprising units which are linked linearly with one another and are of substantially identical kind,

L is a linearly linking group -CO-NR^1- (L^1), R^1 being H or C_1 to C_4 alkyl,

L^1 is a linearly linking group which joins a hydrophobic group Y to a hydrophilic group W and is selected from the group consisting of ~~S, S-S, -CO-O, -O-CO,~~ -CO-NR^1-, -NR^1-CO-, -O-CO-NR^1-, -NR^1-CO-O-, -NR^1-CO-NR^1-, and -NR^1-,

R^1 is H or a straight-chain or branched alkyl which optionally is further substituted,

W is a hydrophilic group, and

Z is an endgroup, being either

~~(a) a reactive endgroup Z^1, wherein Z^1 is selected from the group consisting of -OH, -SH, $-NH_2$, $-NHR^6$, -CN, -NCO, epoxy, $-CH=CH_2$, $-O-CO-CR^7=CH_2$, $-NR^6-CO-CR^7=CH_2$, and -COOH, R^6 being H or C_1 to C_6 alkyl and R^7 being H or CH_3 or~~

~~(b)~~ (a) a nonreactive endgroup Z^2, wherein Z^2 is selected from the group consisting of -H, $-OR^8$, $-NR^8R^9$, $-COOR^8$, and $-CONR^8R^9$, wherein R^8 and R^9 independently being C_1 to C_6 alkyl.

31. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 30, wherein the acidic group X^1 is at least one group selected from the group consisting of -COOH, $-PO(OH)_2$, and $-OPO(OH)_2$ or salts thereof.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Cancelled)

34. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 30, wherein the linearly linked units of the hydrocarbon group Y are units selected from the group consisting of $-CH_2-$ and $-CH_2-CH(CH_3)-$ and $-CH_2-$.

35. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 34, wherein Y is a linear alkyl chain having 8 to 20 carbon atoms.

36. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 35, wherein Y is a linear alkyl chain having 9 to 15 carbon atoms.

37. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 30, wherein the hydrophilic group W is a group comprising C_2 to C_4 alkoxylate units.

38. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 37, wherein the hydrophilic group W comprises 1 to 10 alkoxylate units.

39. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 38, wherein the units number 1 to 5.

40. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 38, wherein the alkoxylate units are ethoxylate units.

41. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 30, which further comprises a corrosion inhibitor.

42. (Previously presented) An adhesion promoter, primer, passivator or conversion coat former which comprises the compound according to claim 30.

43. (Previously presented) A process to produce monomolecular layers on metallic surfaces which comprises using the compound as claimed in claim 30.

44. (Withdrawn) A formulation for treating metal surfaces, comprising at least one compound according to claim 30, a solvent or solvent mixture, and, optionally, further components.

45. (Withdrawn) The formulation according to claim 44, comprising at least one compound having a reactive endgroup Z^1 and at least one compound having a nonreactive endgroup Z^2. wherein Z^1 is selected from the group consisting of -OH, -SH-, $-NH_2$, $-NHR^6$, -CN, -NCO, epoxy, $-CH=CH_2$, $-O-CO-CR^7=CH_2$, $-NR^6-CO-CR^7=CH_2$, and -COOH, R^6 being H or C_1 to C_6 alkyl and R^7 being H or CH_3 and

Z^2 is selected from the group consisting of -H, -OR^8, -NR^8R^9, -$COOR^8$, and -$CONR^8R^9$, wherein R^8 and R^9 independently being C_1 to C_6 alkyl.

46. (Withdrawn) The formulation according to claim 44, wherein the compound further comprises metal particles.

47. (Withdrawn) The formulation according to claim 48, wherein the metal particles are lamellae of Al or Zn or a mixture thereof.

48. (Withdrawn) A method of treating metal surfaces which comprises contacting the metal surface with a formulation according to claim 46.

49. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 48, wherein the metal comprises one or more selected from the group consisting of zinc, aluminum, magnesium, chromium, iron, nickel, and tin or alloys of these metals with one another or with other metals.

50. (Withdrawn) A composite comprising at least one metallic layer, a layer (A) comprising at least one compound according to claim 30, and a second layer (B).

51. (Withdrawn) The composite according to claim 50, wherein the layer (A) is a monomolecular layer.

52. (Withdrawn) The composite according to claim 50, wherein the second layer (B) is a paint coat.

53. (Withdrawn) The composite according to claim 50, further comprising a pretreatment layer which has been applied to the metal.